THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSHI) : (a) As per Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI & S) figures, Indo-China bilateral trade during April-September, 1988 aggregated to Rs. 130.9 crores. Mineral ores, leather products, textile yarn etc. constitute the main items of export to China and vegetables and fruits, textile fibres, silk yarn, chemical products etc. constitute main items of import from china.

(b) A total of 85 trade delegations were exchanged between the two countries in the last three years.

Export of Iron Ore from Paradip Port

259. SHRI SUBAS MOHANTY: will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the present capacity of export of iron ore from Paradip port;

(b) the total export made during the current year, till date: and

(c) whether a large quantity of Iron ore has accumulated at the mine sites for export, if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSHI) : (a) The present annual capacity of export of iron ore from Paradip Port is about 3 million tonnes.

(b) About 1.58 million tonnes of iron ore has been exported by Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation from Paradip Port up to mid-February, 1989 during the current financial year.

(c) As on 31.1.1989, accumulated stocks with MMTC at the loading stations connected with mines of Bihar and Orissa which feed Paradip Port are of the order of 0.86 million tonnes.

Performance of rural banks

260. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to increase the number of branches of banks in the rural areas;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof, Statewise;

(c) whether it is a fact that the operating cost of rural banks is increasing;

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(e) what steps have been taken to improve the performance of rural banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) The aim of current Branch Licensing Policy for 1985-90 co-terminus with Seventh Five Year Plan period is to achieve a coverage of 17,000 population per bank office in the rural and semi-urban areas of each development block and make available at least one bank office within a distance of 10 Kms. from every village. Keeping the Policy norms in view, RBI up to the end of January, 1989, has allotted 5359 rural and semi-urban centres to commercial banks including Regional Rural Banks for opening branches under the current Policy; the State-wise details are given in the statement (*see* below)

(c) to (e) The operating cost of all branches including rural branches are likely to go up with increase in the establishment costs. Government from time to time have been impressing upon the Public Sector Banks the need for bringing about economy in expenditure by toning up their functioning.

Statement

State-wise number of rural and semi-urban *centres allotted by Reserve Bank of India to commercial banks including Regional* ***Rural Banks up to 31.1.1989.***

State/ Union Territory	No. of centres allotted
Andhra Pradesh	388
Arunachal Pradesh	29
Assam	260
Bihar	385
Gujarat	244
Goa	6
Haryana	128
Himachal Pradesh	163
Jammu & Kashmir	36
Karnataka	252
Kerala	74
Madhya Pradesh	486
Maharashtra	512
Manipur	20
Meghalaya	26
Mizoram	35
Nagaland	18
Orissa	183
Punjab	117
Rajasthan	239
Sikkim	7
Tamil Nadu	256
Tripura	35
Uttar Pradesh	927
West Bengal	519
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	8
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1
Delhi	1
Lakshadweep	3
Pondicherry	1
TOTAL	5359

Rubber plantation in Orissa

261. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate areas in different parts of Orissa which have been brought under the Rubber Plantation so far;

(b) the year since when Rubber Plantation was started in Orissa and the result yielded, if any;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to bring additional hectares of land under Rubber Plantation in that State; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) About 180 hectares of land has been brought under rubber cultivation in different areas of Orissa so far.

(b) While trial plantations were started in 1966, the commercial cultivation started from 1984. The Growth performance is quite satisfactory though production has not so far started.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, Rubber cultivation is being promoted in the districts of Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Denkanal, Cuttack, Puri and Ganjam. A Zonal office of the Rubber Board was set up in Bhubaneshwar and regional offices have been set up at Behrampur and Baripada. The rubber growers in Orissa are being given financial assistance under the Rubber Plantation Development Scheme which include cash subsidy, interest subsidy, additional assistance for use of planting material of advanced growth raised in polybags etc.

Development of handicrafts

262. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount spent on the development of handicrafts during the Seventh plan period so far;

(b) the various steps taken by Government for the development of handicrafts;

(c) the incentives being given to the rural artisans to promote handicrafts; and

(d) the details thereof?